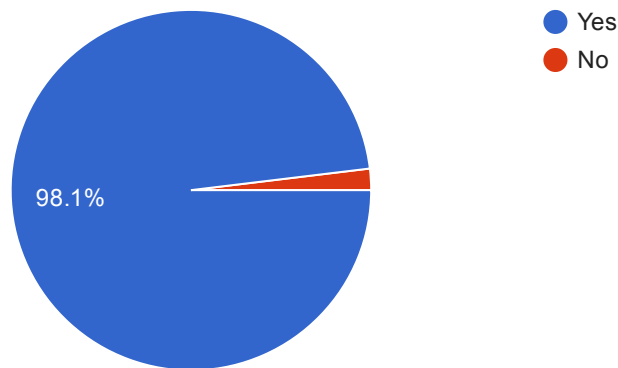


VRS VI Quality Survey

1,095 responses

Are you a Video Relay Interpreter?

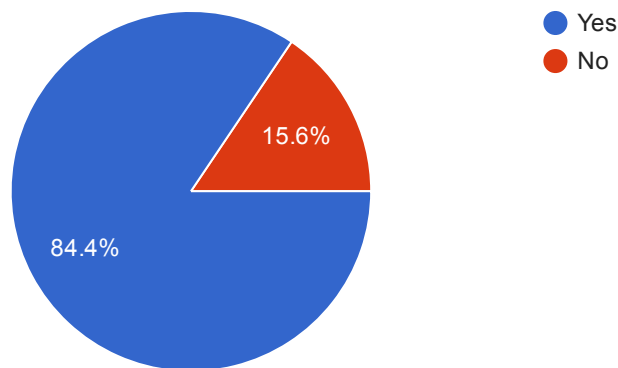
1,095 responses



VRS experience

Do you hold any interpreting certifications?

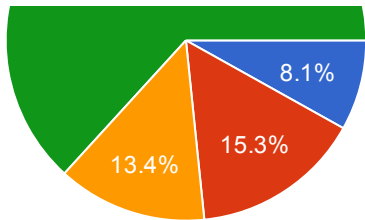
1,073 responses



How long have you worked in VRS?

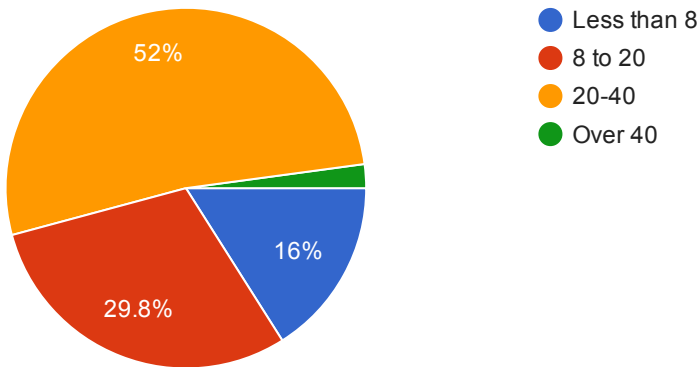
1,074 responses





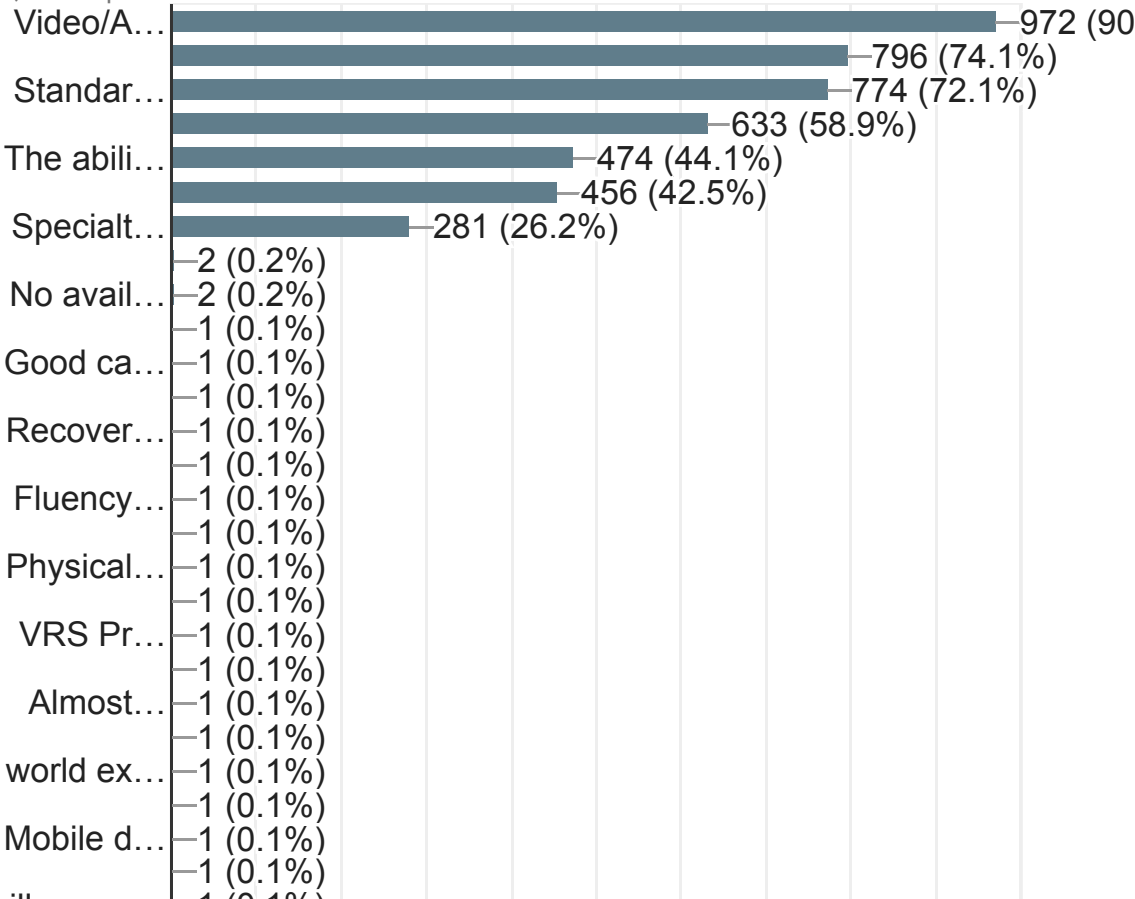
How many hours a week do you work in VRS?

1,074 responses

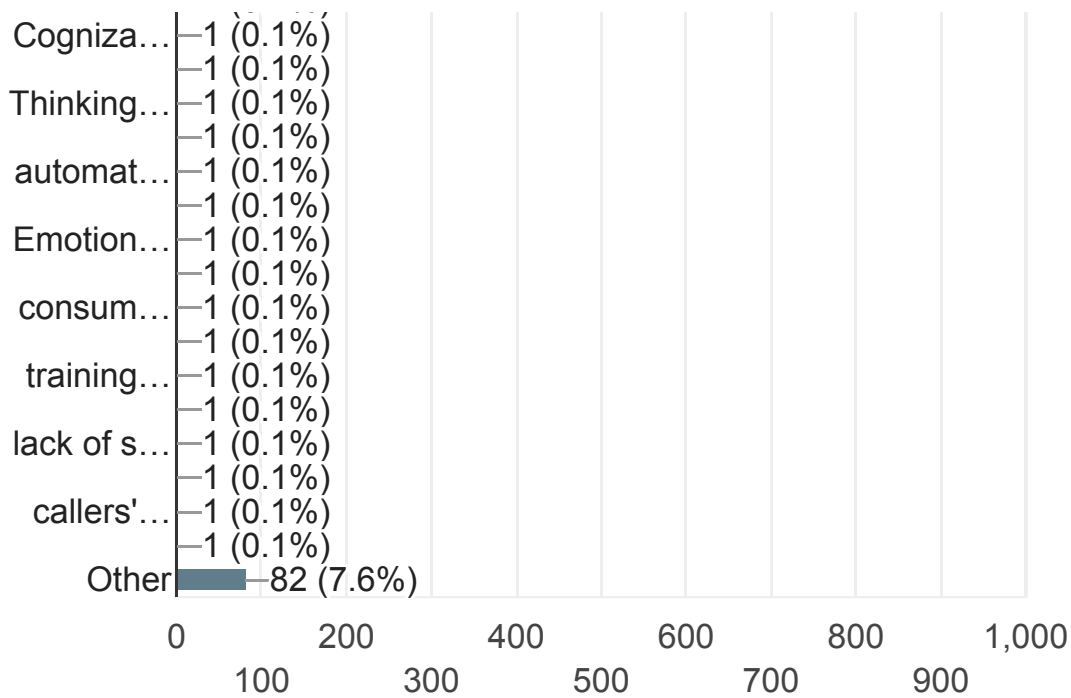


What specific factors impact the quality and accuracy of VRS interpretation?

1,074 responses

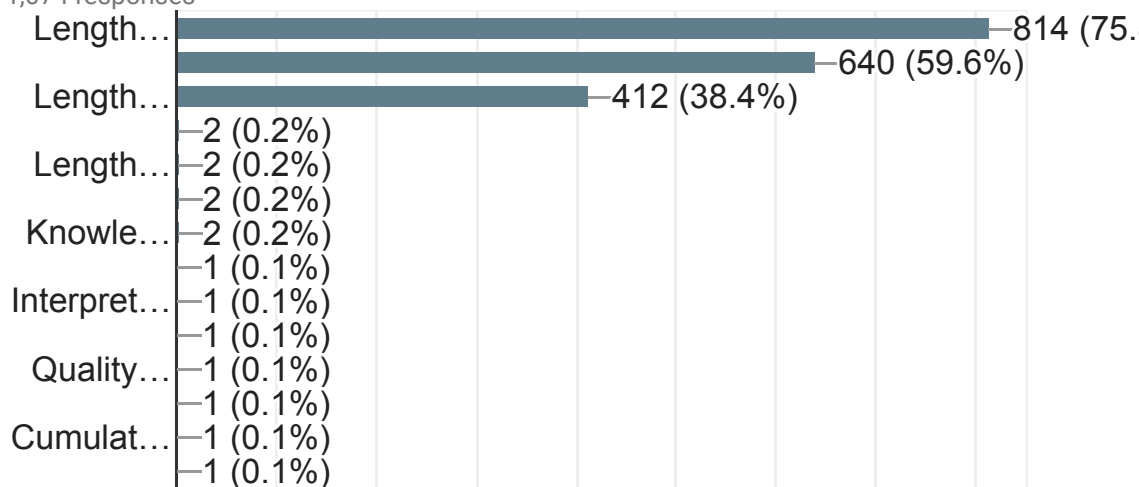


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training...	1 (0.1%)
Feeling...	1 (0.1%)
Consum...	1 (0.1%)
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Interpret...	1 (0.1%)
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when VI...	1 (0.1%)
the calle...	1 (0.1%)
comfort...	1 (0.1%)
The und...	1 (0.1%)
The fact...	1 (0.1%)
Lack of...	1 (0.1%)
content...	1 (0.1%)
Not eno...	1 (0.1%)

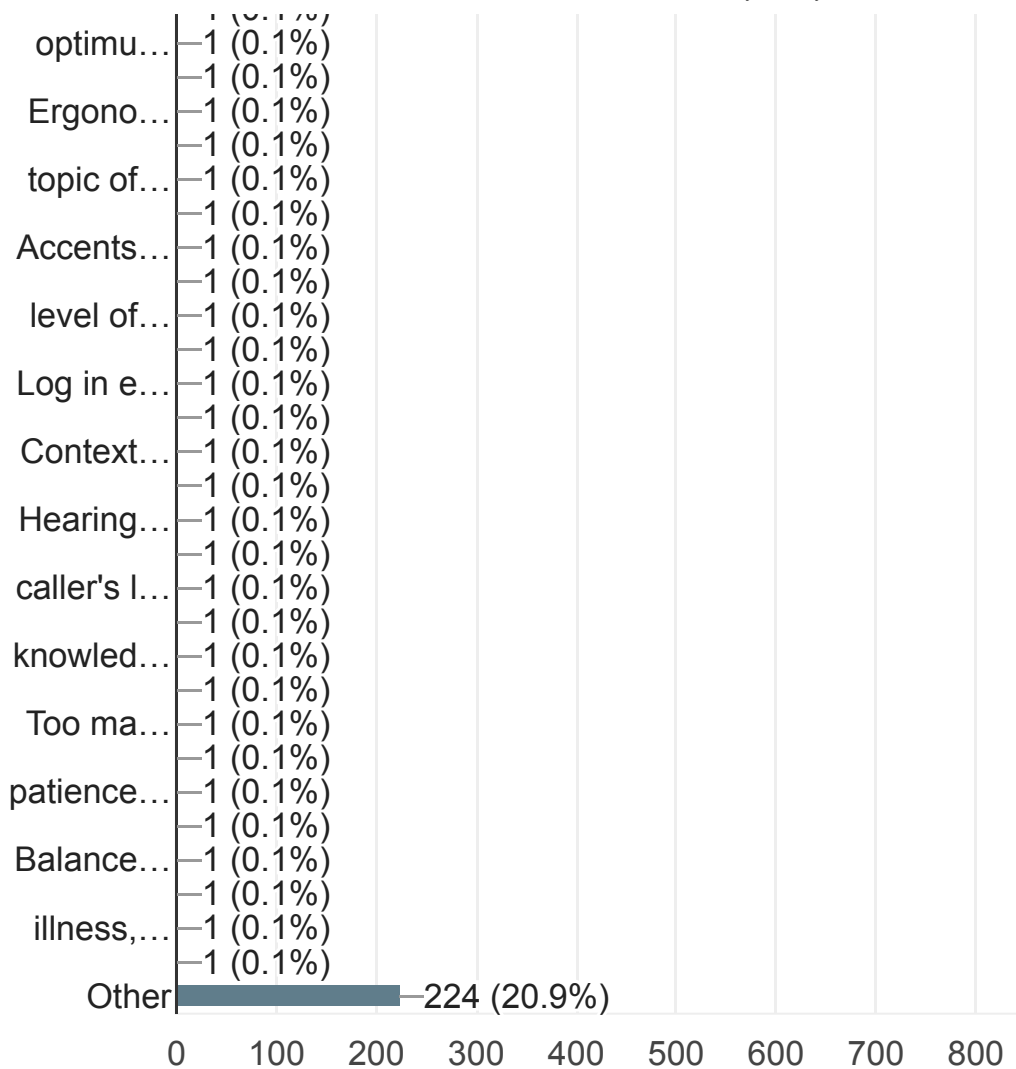


Scenario: A VI with several years of experience is processing a call with optimum video. What factors will impact the quality and accuracy of the message?

1,074 responses

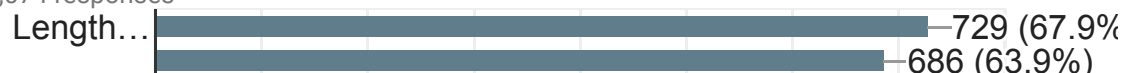


Knowle...	1 (0.1%)
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	1 (0.1%)
Accent...	1 (0.1%)
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Depend...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
If the int...	1 (0.1%)
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Density...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
Call con...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
Fatigue...	1 (0.1%)
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Bridging...	1 (0.1%)
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	1 (0.1%)
abstain	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
Interpret...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
Familiari...	1 (0.1%)
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User's k...	1 (0.1%)
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Having...	1 (0.1%)
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Amount...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
Qualifie...	1 (0.1%)
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linguisti...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
length o...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
topic - d...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)
Knowle...	1 (0.1%)
	1 (0.1%)



Scenario: A new graduate is hired to work in VRS. The new graduate is processing a call with optimum video/audio quality. What factors would impact the quality and accuracy of the message?

1,074 responses

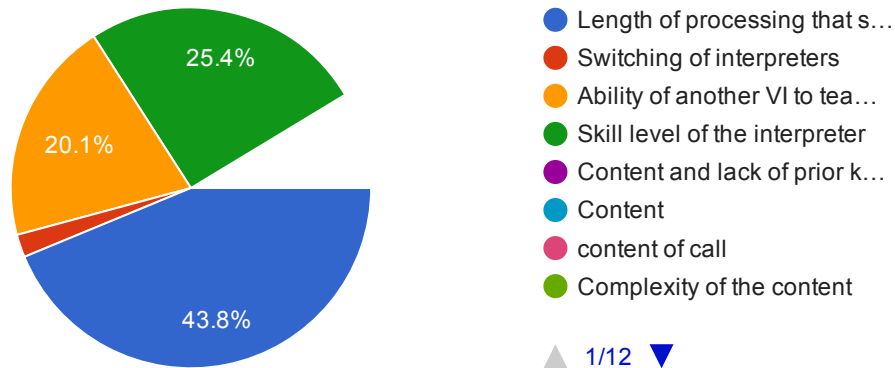






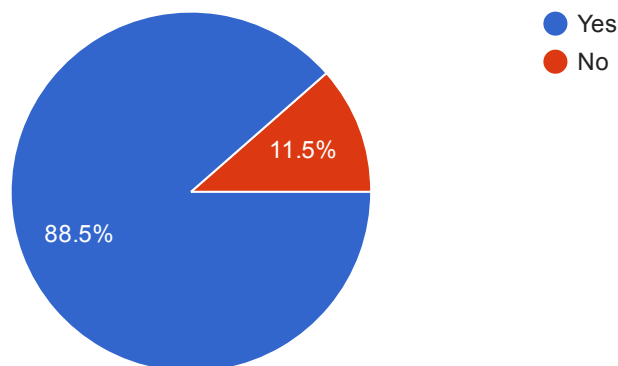
When interpreting a lengthy call with optimum video and audio quality what most affects the quality of the interpretation?

1,074 responses



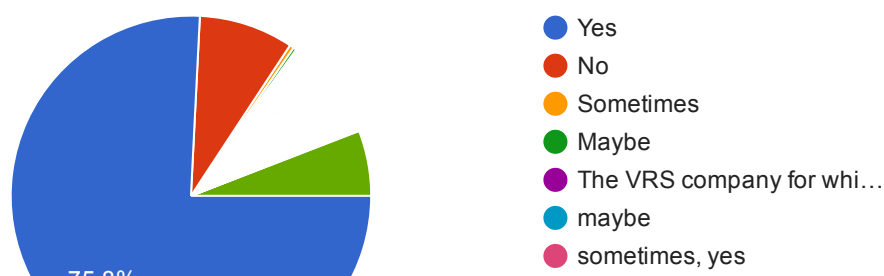
Does the number of years of experience a VI has affect the quality and accuracy of the calls they interpret?

1,074 responses



Would quality improve if you were allowed a reasonable amount of "customer service time" to get information from the customer about the call before being expected to dial? (time spent with customer before a call that is not billed to the FCC)

1,074 responses



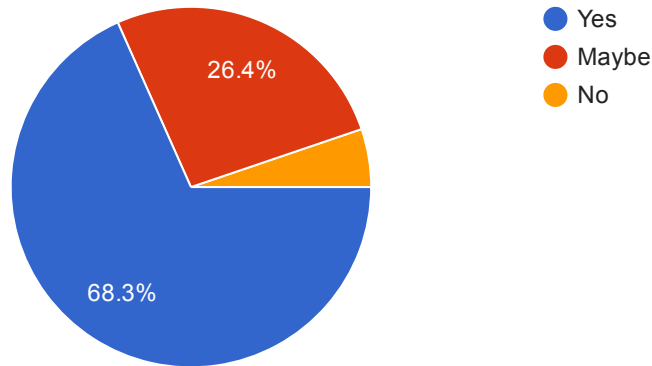


● but if we do that then we g...

▲ 1/13 ▼

Do you believe a CDI working in your office, being available to team certain calls, would improve the quality to the consumer?

1,074 responses



Do you feel that your company cares about the quality of interpretation services they provide? Please explain your answer

1,074 responses

Yes (29)

yes (16)

Yes. (10)

Yes. (4)

Yes (4)

Absolutely (3)

yes (3)

YES (3)

Somewhat (2)

Sometimes (2)

Yes because if misinterpretation or misunderstanding happens this reflects poorly on the company (2)

No. (2)

It's a balance between quality of service and quantity of minutes. (2)

They say they do, yet recent changes make me wonder how important quality is as compared to revenue. (2)

I believe it has improved in terms of who they hire initially. I don't believe the stellar interpreters are recognized

I believe it has improved in terms of who they hire initially. I don't believe the stellar interpreters are recognized or compensated differently than those that aren't as skilled. (2)

Yes they do (2)

To some degree...but, now that you mention it, another stressor on me (personally) is overhearing what may be categorized as "inaccurate interpretations" or poor customer service from fellow VAI's in nearby cubicles (2)

Yes I do. They take care to make sure teams are available and that everyone takes the off time they need to rest. (2)

My company is hiring young, untried, uncertified, recent graduates, many of these VIs do not have the ASL language competency nor world experience that lays a foundation for interpreting in VRS.

Yes- requires certified

No. Based on the minutes we must work before breaking, the lack of support when we need teams for calls, the lack of ASKING the interpreters what they need - all of these show they do not care about the people providing direct services.

Absolutely not. All they care about is billable minutes - not about the health of their interpreters or the quality of the work product or internal customer service

They say "yes", but always expecting more out of the interpreter, regardless of the effect on quality

I feel VRS Providers need to advocate more on behalf of interpreters to increase lag time and reduce the time it takes for the interpreter to connect both calls.

Yes. However- the pressure on the VI to stay logged in and to be fearful of getting in trouble inevitably will negatively impact the quality of work produced.

no, because they hire qualified interpreters, newbies, and don't support us when it comes to interpreting issues, or call etiquette

Yes. They screen applicants, many aren't able to pass. Teams are generally available when needed. We're encouraged to take time as necessary.

Yes. They offer professional development, mentoring, teaming, etc. to support high quality.

Yes. They offer training, support, and allow for teaming and breaks.

Of less value than minutes billed/profit for the company.

No. Hiring non-certified interpreters diminished the quality the services the customers receive.

Yes, they are concerned when hiring interpreters and continue to monitor during employment

Yes. Your goal is login percentage but if you need to take time off during a shift to rest they understand and you are encouraged to do if you need.

Yes, I am supported in every way and we screen new employees

No. Just the numbers.

Yes. I work for convo relay and they have specific guidelines in place to make sure the interpreters health and well being is satisfactory.

They are more concern of FCC rules

Convo wants skilled and experienced interpreters who understand the culture, as a company we know that certification does not in and of itself mean that that individual is ready for VRS. Convo truly cares about not only our Deaf customers but also equally cares about their interpreters health and well being.

No. My company hires even interpreters who do not pass the company's performance test. They offer those interpreters minimal training and then they are not monitored. My company has many incentives for speed of answer and disconnect, high login percentages, but no incentives to improve quality.

No. There is no management on the floor. They have no idea about the quality of the VIs unless a customer complains or compliments the VI to Customer Service, on their own time. Hearing customers have no idea how to do that.

But there are automated reports that show upper management how many billable minutes we've processed in so many hours

Yes, but I also believe the company wants us to get through as many calls as possible to make the most money

Yes, quality service is what maintains the values and success of the company, staff and customers.

Yes, Convo is focused on making the interpreter as invisible as possible.

No they do not. They want to have calls answered not provide what is best.

Not really. The bottom line is profit. They'd rather pay less (without care for quality) than pay more for a qualified person.

No. They care about numbers: period! How long on call.. how long did it take you to answer that call...

Yes and no - I do believe we are just a cog in the wheel of VRS companies, making money off of us. But my particular call center has great management and does emphasize self care as much as possible.

Yes, but their hands are tied by the powers that be.

Absolutely! My company even encourages us to engage with the customer to make sure the interpretation is the best possible.

My company cares not only about the VI and their wellbeing but making sure all possible needs to make a call go as best as possible are available. We also go through an intensive screening process to be hired.

No. They care about log in and billable minutes. They care only about money.

yes, but more could be done in order to help relieve stress caused on the front lines

Quite frankly I am not sure anymore. We are being pressured with numbers and stats in a way we never have been before.

I believe the Company cares more for service provision and the amount before quality. It is my observation that the Company has focused on hiring less experienced and non-certified interpreters because the cheaper workforce increases profitability.

Yes, but I don't think it's of utmost importance and I don't think they educate consumers of their power in calls.

I have worked for 4 VRS companies since 2004. Some care more than others.

Not any longer. Recent policy changes have made metrics and numbers the center focus and the customer is the last priority.

Yes, it is Deaf owned and signing certifies. We empower the Deaf callers, and we are all highly qualified

yes, it is Deaf owned and signing-centric. we empower the Deaf callers, and we are all highly qualified interpreters.

Yes. Providing breaks and meal breaks in order for interpreters to have a mental break. This helps them to refresh/reset. Also, by allowing all interpreters to have a team interpreter whenever needed.

No. I have never been evaluated on my interpreting skills, nor commended or discipline for my interpreting. The same is true of my colleagues, other than complaints/commendations passed on from the consumers. I have only been disciplined related to billable minutes, which tells me that they do not care about the quality of the interpretations.

No. My company continuously hires new/inexperienced interpreters, unqualified interpreters and interpreters with bad attitudes that make Deaf callers sound rude, aggressive and angry. My company also pays interpreters significantly less per hour than the going rate in our community (\$12/ hour less for me) which attracts lower-quality interpreters who cannot find work elsewhere. There is also very little supervision and monitoring of the interpreter's work.

I believed they did, until I was hired in and saw what other interpreters were missing.

yes, plenty of time to debrief, teaming available at any time, plenty of breaks

No, it's all about getting the most out of the interpreter and paying minimal wages

no they only care about billable minutes

The company only cares if the consumers make a complaint.

Yes. I believe all of the interpreters I work with value the quality of their work. Also the company accepts feedback from consumers and interpreters in order to better improve their service

Yes, but lately it seems like metrics are most important

No. The process for commendations and complaints are too cumbersome. Not Deaf accessible.

yes I do. however it all comes down to the "minutes"

Yes I do. Our director is excellent and compassionate.

Yes. They want us to do a quality job, but they also value being remaining financially stable.

Yes I chose to work at Convo after 9 years at a previous VRS provider whom I felt didn't take care of the VIs nor respected the deaf callers.

Not anymore. Now the job is about the almighty dollar and the stats

There is little to no monitoring of the quality of interpreters work. It is all about how quickly you take a call and hang up the call and how long you are logged in to take more calls.

No, it's about money not the consumer

Yes. The company I work for has a screening test that they make all potential hires with less than 3 years of VRS experience take before determining an offer of employment.

Yes . Rigorous screening in place

No, they are more concerned with #s, available and billing

Not sure; minimum standards of quality are poorly defined industry wide (e.g., lack of certification requirements and lack of fluency requirements for both source and target languages)

Yes. We have a rigorous screening, continuing education, supportive management and team.

No, they are interested in the numbers.

Yes. They have a testing requirement that is not the easiest to pass. They prefer we take 10 minute breaks but if we need longer they are understanding and do not monitor that unless it becomes a habit. I have seen people let go for not meeting interpreting standards after being given feedback and ample time to improve.

Yes. They do not always get to hire the most qualified interpreters because pay is not competitive enough as an incentive to pull the best talent.

Yes I work for an amazing supportive company

I believe so. There is ongoing professional development and support

Yes; look at choices made thus far and customer satisfaction with those choices.

Absolutely. We are encouraged to be open about any concerns we have so that any issues will be addressed as soon as possible.

Yes, quality of interpretation is the first priority. A team is always a click away.

Yes but it's secondary to numbers

No! The bar has been lowered as experienced interpreters become burnt out on VRS interpreting or no longer want the environment.

When asked, they do, but it seems with the policies they enact, and their lack of empathy and understanding of our work, they actually don't.

Partially. Minutes in the seat, logged in seem to trump interpreter needs.

Yes, very much, but they must follow current FCC rules and rates and keep the doors open. This is not easy.

Yes! My company takes measures to ensure we are well trained and prepared.

No. Due to the demands placed by FCC regulations and reduced reimbursement, VRS providers are forced more and more to simply fill seats.

Yes. There is open dialogue between the staff and VIs

They used to seem to care more, now the focus is on numbers and making more money, and increasing market share.

No. Billable minutes is more important than quality as evidenced by being strongly discouraged to team because of cost.

Sure. They care more about numbers and metrics though.

Other (900)

What do you believe would improve the quality of your interpretation in the VRS setting if video was already optimal?

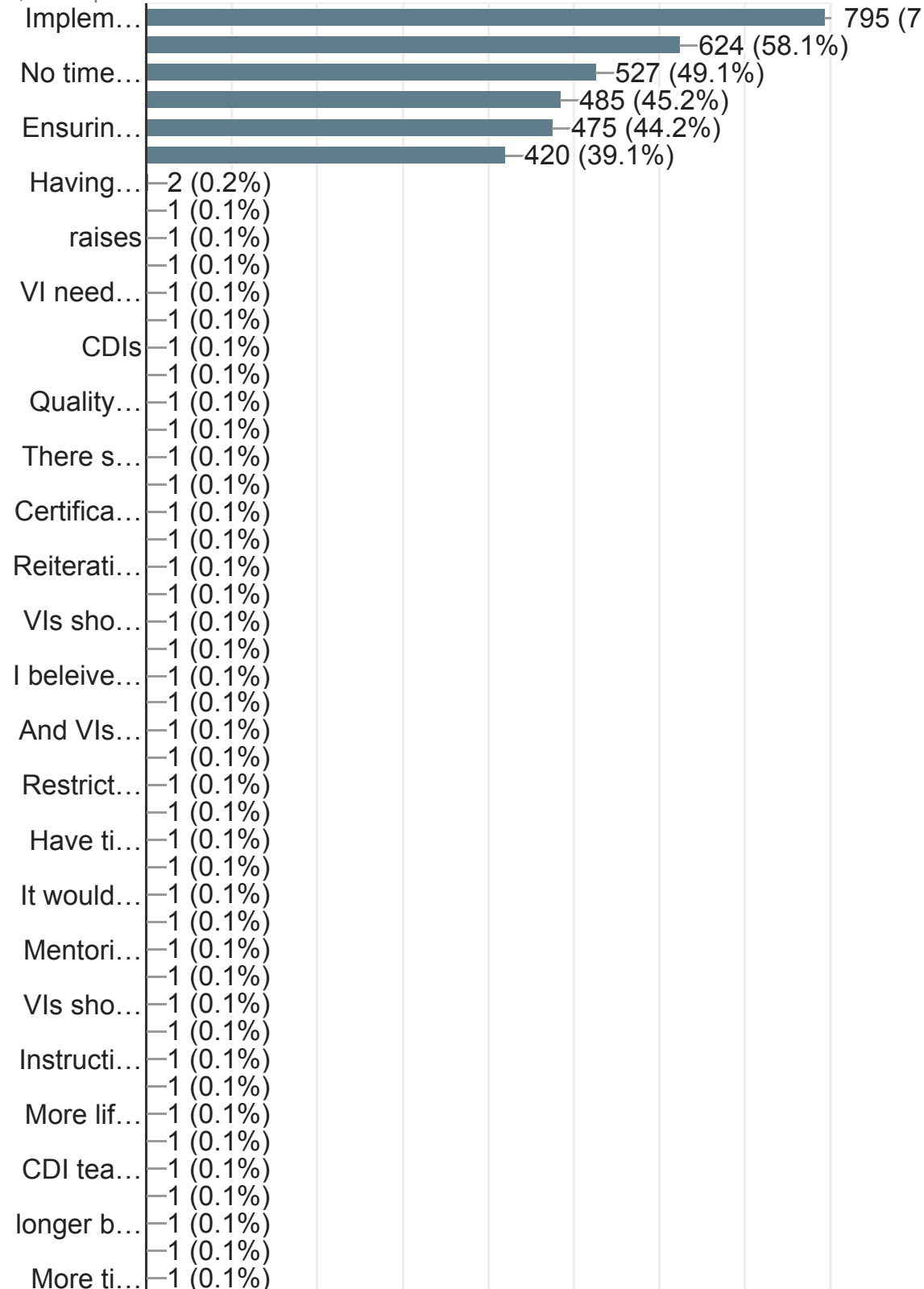
1,074 responses





What applicable standards should be considered towards improving the quality and accuracy of video interpretation?

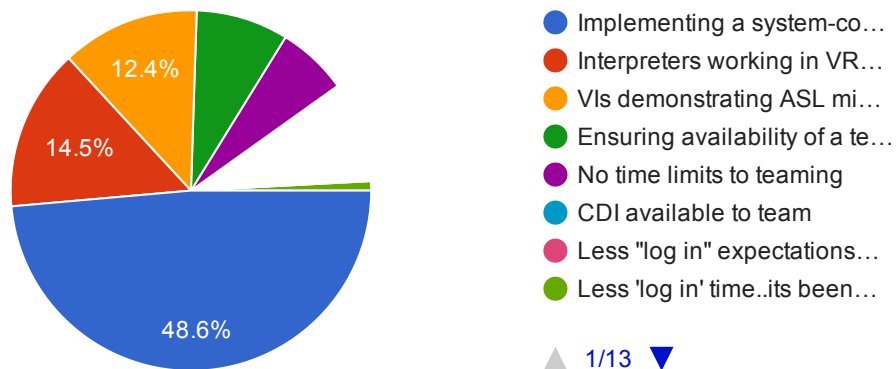
1,074 responses





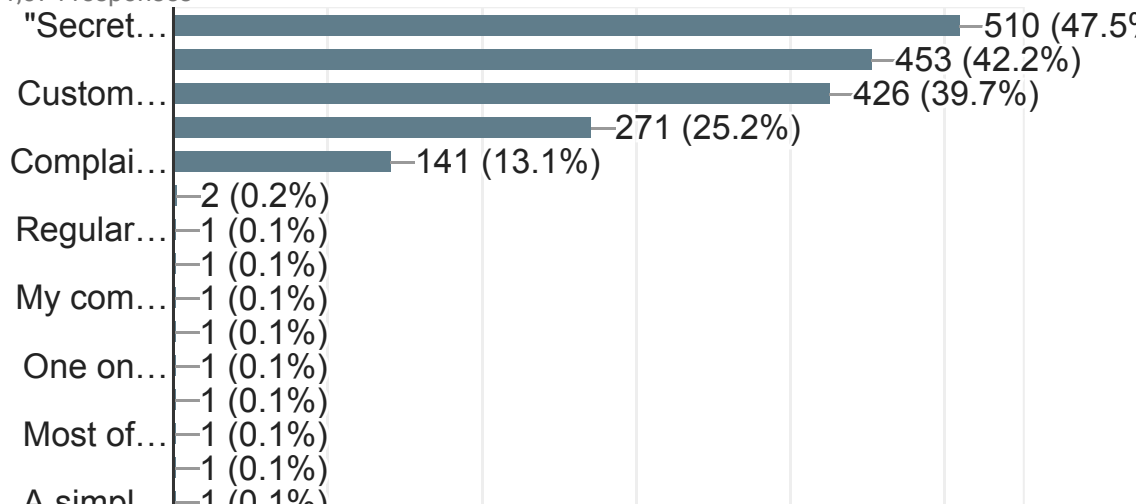
If only allowed one, what applicable standards would you choose to implement to improve the quality and accuracy of video interpretation?

1,074 responses

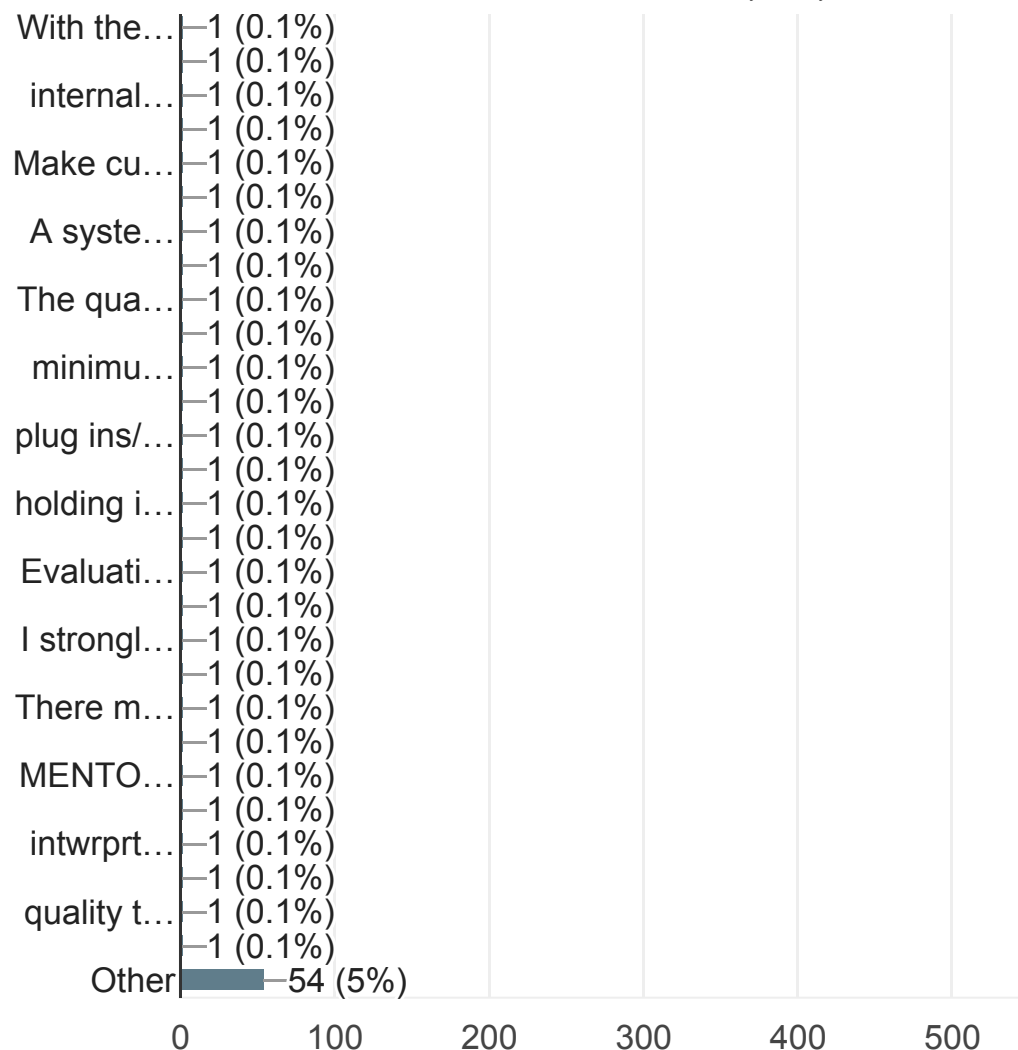


What methods should be used to evaluate the quality and accuracy of video interpretation so that the VRS industry can improve quality as a whole rather than being used as a tool to evaluate specific video interpreters?

1,074 responses



A simple...	1 (0.1%)
Observa...	1 (0.1%)
assesso...	1 (0.1%)
N/a	1 (0.1%)
Continui...	1 (0.1%)
None of...	1 (0.1%)
This qu...	1 (0.1%)
Several...	1 (0.1%)
I like the...	1 (0.1%)
a stricte...	1 (0.1%)
Any on...	1 (0.1%)
peer rev...	1 (0.1%)
Compan...	1 (0.1%)
Compan...	1 (0.1%)
Trust int...	1 (0.1%)
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Custom...	1 (0.1%)
A rating...	1 (0.1%)
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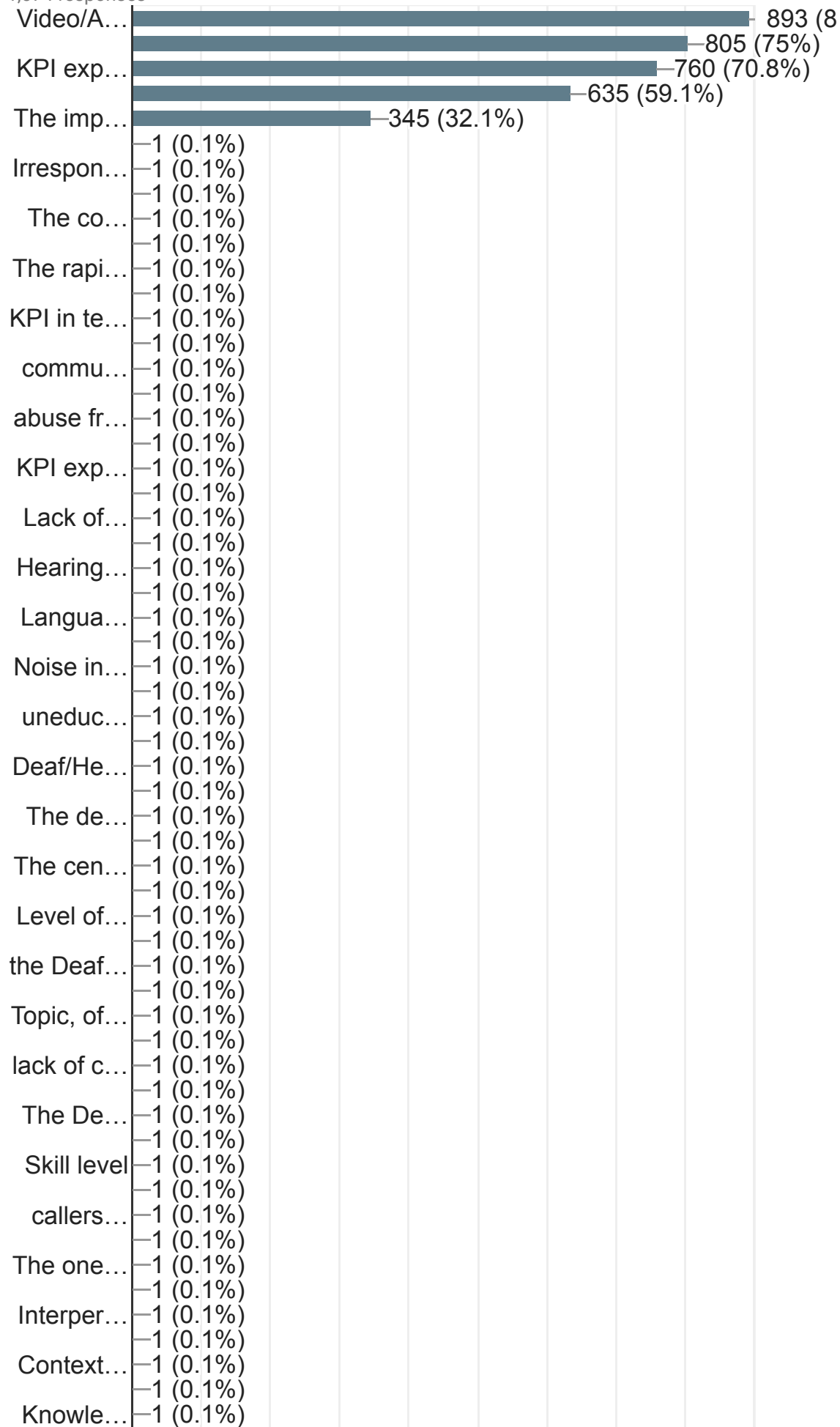


When considering Demand Control Schema

What Demands impact the quality of service in VRS?

1,074 responses

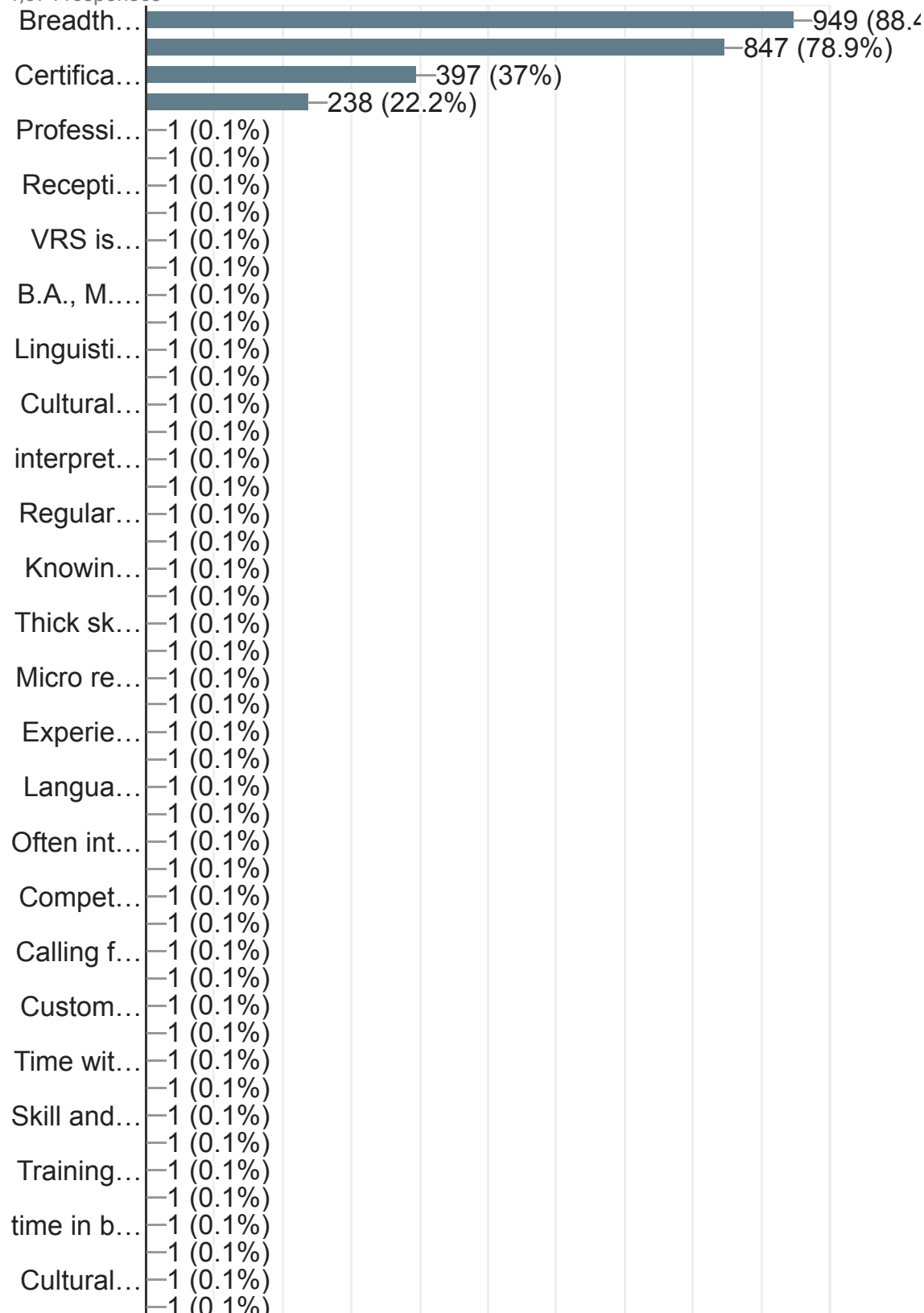
1,074 responses





What controls are relevant to meeting the needs in VRS?

1,074 responses





Is there anything we haven't asked about that you feel impacts the quality of interpretation in the VRS setting? If so, what?"

1,074 responses

No (138)

no (122)

No. (21)

n/a (16)

N/A (8)

None (7)

No (6)

. (6)

N/a (6)

NA (6)

NO (5)

No. (4)

Na (3)

nothing (3)

none (3)

The support of center management- have heard horror stories of mismanagement and misinformation that made burn out and vicarious trauma double. (2)

No. (2)

Access to internet to be able to research/look at what the callers are discussing or seeing on their screen. (2)

The stress of consistently overhearing poor interpretations& then not employing clarification/process management skills to resolve the issues, and/or a lack of customer service skills (often by under-qualified interpreters (whether certified or not, whether or not a veteran interpreter, etc)...the audism that is sanctioned by the need to "fill a seat and take a call" modality is perpetuated onto the Deaf community too often (vicarious trauma?!)) (2)

no (2)

I feel these questions were broad and comprehensive. (2)

Nothing that I can think of. (2)

I cannot think of anything else. (2)

Not at this time (2)

Not that I can think of. (2)

Can't think of anything (2)

na (2)

Management that understands and respects VIs

deaf ppl using 1 hand to communicate while walking, or laying down, or on a train all of this unnecessary movement makes it difficult to do our job

Ergonomics of work stations. Ability to change from sitting to standing as desired.

Computer savvyness; multi-tasking skills with mouse & keyboard

Obligation to interpret fraudulent (scammer's) calls.

yes. ergonomics.

N

Making sure the deaf consumer understands we are human. Mistakes may be occasionally made. As well it should not be their goal to purposely try to trip up an interpreters voicing, but rather to work together to ensure effective communication.

Deaf customers who dont know how to use interpreters

The VRS industry ignores most best practices some of us have fought for years to establish. I have paid for my 2 full-time years in VRS with my physical and mental health and with my relationships with family and friends. The stress has been incalculable. The endless games and incentives to increase speed of answer in the face of ZERO focus on quality caused me such grief that I could barely stand it. Some VIs are fantastic and the service is so important but my company's business practices are abusive to both interpreters and deaf callers.

There needs to be fewer punishments for using a team.

Geography of different states and local slang/dialects

Bad management and lack of respect for the Interpreters.

Lots of rules and trainings. Rewards for more hours worked- VRS can't be a full time job. Burnt ou VI's.

Lack of understanding on the part of the hearing caller

Regional signs or slang.

Not that I can think of

The callers understating of how telephone systems work "norm procedures" like phone trees.. etc

VRS should be a teamed job.

no, all topics of concern have been covered

The technology aspect was not taken into consideration enough in this survey, I feel. If we cannot see the caller or hear the hearing person we cannot do our jobs.

Management taking into account the human factor before resorting to discipline because certain KPIs may not have been met. Currently, at my company, no mitigating factors are taken into account, even when documented.

A required proportion of certified interpreters to non-certified would bring up skill levels. More CDI usage.

I believe you have to want to deal with people. Happy, sad, upset, grieving, every call is different, and should have adequate time to breath after each call.

Allowing interpreters to do their job professionally without micromanaging them and their metrics.

The cooperation/teamwork of rotating breaks and teaming is important as well as the signing caller having a good wifi connection, using both hands to sign, and paying attention to the call.

Companies should stop monitoring billable minutes, as VIs have no control and leads to undue stress, and the forcing of longer than expected login times.

How long of an opportunity I have to see the Deaf client's signing style, and if I have an Opportunity to get even the smallest hint of what the call topic will be

Less focus on how fast you can click a button and more focus on you skills as an interpreter.

Quality of ITP graduates.

Availability of CDIs

Getting your proper break time in for mental health and to prevent injuries

confidence with real-world situations and interpreting skill are paramount

VRS companies understaffing to make the most profit

Time to debrief with teams and brainstorm with other VIs about successful strategies while maintaining confidentiality.

video quality

It's not possible to answer this question. Any interpreter and any service provider knows that there are endless things that can impact the quality of an interpretation. Reasons can be both interpersonal and intrapersonal. In short, anything can impact the interpreting process. We are humans interacting with other humans. We are not machines.

Regional terms

The ability to make judgement calls in regards to my work (ie needing a team, tech help, mental health break, when to take a break, etc.)

Verbal abusive feedback from customers.

Lack of consumer knowledge of the job demands. Deaf: screen placement, lighting and internet speed. Hearing: lag time, interpreters being unfamiliar with consumer/location specific information.

VRS is a difficult venue for many VIs. The reason is the frustration in not being able to serve the consumer better. Also not feeling valuable to the company or to the caller.

The lack of support and appreciation from management and even deaf consumers.

VRS companies reward those who work the most with more work. I don't think that's a good metric for issuing schedules because the interpreters who work the most hours tend to be the most burnt out and tired on calls.

Regional vs out of state linguists creates hostility with consumer. Training for knowledge is essential

I can't think of anything at the moment.

When and how complaints are shared. Are complaints really based on a VI or on company equipment

Cuts in rates paid by the FCC result in diminishing time between calls, lowered minimum quality standards so greater numbers of "less expensive" unqualified interpreters are hired to be VIs, increasingly draconian and inhumane "efficiency" requirements are heaped on VIs so service providers can maximize cashflow, and substandard services provided to consumers!

Consumers multi tasking, not attending to conversations, understanding phone trees, consumers signing one handed .

The competency of all managing staff to respond to emails timely. Different lights or backdrops for low vision/ blind consumers.

Raising the caliber of VRS interpreters by providing competitive pay, while not forcing us to work for 'X' minutes per hour would allow the absolute best in our field to feel motivated to come work for a VRS company. It is grueling work, that if an interpreter can get paid better and work less elsewhere, they usually do.

I think you have hit everything

A vast ASL/Deaf Cultural knowledge required. Requirement of longer VRS 'initiation' time and required discussion of observations & feedback prior to final 'release' to handle calls alone. Perhaps a final 'challenging' exam to confirm readiness or not.

Video and audio quality has a major impact in ensuring a call is completed smoothly and at the best ability of the interpreter.

...

How burn out impacts interpreters in this setting.

How can we as the interpreters hold each other accountable for quality service

The community aspect and culture of the work place. When VIs are trusted and motivated by their fellow VIs and the management above them, the workload feels lighter and you feel less alone and therefore less fatigued.

CDI should be required in each center

Nothing

...ing

Yes. The consumers do not understand the many limitations of VRS, from imperfect linguistic match, to poor audio/video, lack of specific knowledge of their personal life or profession, to the consumer's responsibility to aid in a successful interpretation. It takes teamwork for the very best interpretation to happen.

I have 20 years experience interpreting and am highly educated. This job challenges me everyday. Toughest job I have ever had. The focus on numbers is first and foremost ridiculous. If I get a 20 min hold and my colleague does not, our numbers look the same. She may need more break time than I. There has to be a better way to make it fair.

willingness of deaf and hearing consumers. If they don't want to, or can't, work with the interpreter, the interpretation will be lousy.

Client familiarity with how calls are processed

A way for interpreters to mark a call at the completion with a label like non-typical asl, drunk, mental issues, minimal language, etc so that complaints dept can see that more than one tarp had similar problems with that caller.

Not enough about break time away from the screens. My VRS company gives us 10 min an hour, but also expects us to do training and read/respond to email in this time. We need time away from the computer

I think that there are an endless number of factors that could impact the quality of an interpretation in the VRS setting. It will vary from call to call and is dependent upon the individuals and the call itself.

Negative initial encounter with consumer whether hearing or Deaf.

Be given more processing time by the deaf consumer

The bright lights and computer screen hurts my eyes. Callers who don't know how to use the Do Not Announce feature cause their calls to be choppy and unmanageable. More training for VIs in call handling tips & tricks, hearing vs. Deaf phone culture, how women vs. men talk, vocabulary exercises in register (slang vs. formal), etc.

Breaks away from the screen. I feel 45 minutes on, 15 minutes off in addition to one minute in between calls as a standard would be a positive change for the VRS industry.

The company's value of humanness of each interpreter and caller, and the perspective that we are part of a "call team" – Deaf, hearing, VI – each responsible for making the call successful; I would also like to see built-in time to mentor/observe coworkers (while not teaming) so that we can learn from each other (we are each others role models)

Nerves

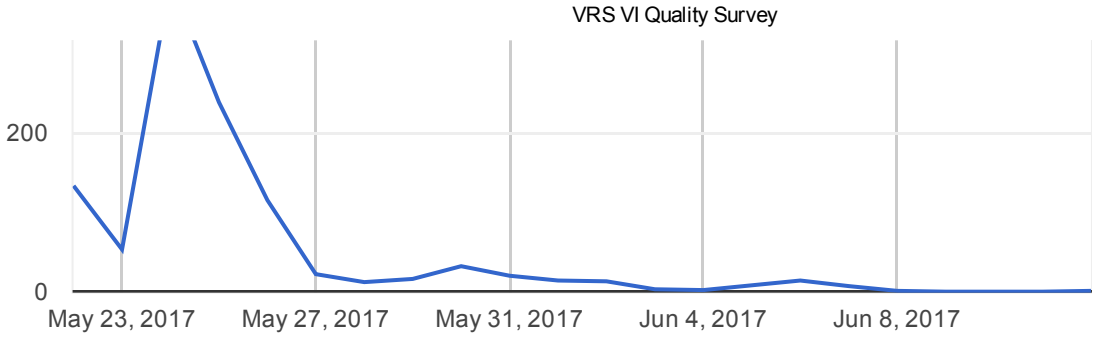
Other (623)

Thank you for your feedback!

Number of daily responses

400





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